

I support media diversity

I am writing to you today to about the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. If it's goals are to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should, at minimum, retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry. Actually, I think that the rules should be changed to promote more diversity of ownership. I would certainly like to see many different local media with local interests in mind.

I remember as a child that the media were supposed to be in the public interest. Today they seem to be in the interest only of corporations, big money, and right wing political views. One only has to listen to the BBC world news to see how biased our media has become, and it is not biased in favor of the public interest. Living in Houston, which has the maximum allowable number of Clear Channel stations, one only has to scan the FM dial for a short while to become disgusted with the pablum served up on the many canned, one flavor for all tastes, formats which Clear Channel produces. We the people of the United States deserve better than to have all of our media owned by a few corporations who attempt to program and propagandize us for their and their advertisers benefit, and to indoctrinate us with whatever the government has as it's agenda. We deserve more choice, more variety, more independence than we have now, not less, which is exactly what we will be getting if the media ownership rules are relaxed.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become disgustingly limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to further merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be further compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding, and in the future making these rules even stricter in order to allow for a wider variety of ownership of media in our country.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest. This relaxing of the rules on media ownership, and especially the rush to do so without adequate public input, seems to me to be very suspect.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues

more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Sincerely,

John C. Burch